



**Office of the Attorney General
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NEWS RELEASE

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WEST TENNESSEE MAN PLEADS GUILTY IN WASTEWATER DUMPING CASE

A former Collierville wastewater treatment operator has pleaded guilty in a Shelby County Criminal Court to discharging untreated sewage into the Wolfe River. Terry Williams today pleaded to three counts of discharging raw sewage into the Wolf River and 11 counts of submitting false documents to the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC), all Class E felonies.

Williams was sentenced to eight years in jail and ordered to pay \$4,000 in restitution and fines. As part of the agreement, Williams agreed to surrender his license from TDEC to operate both the wastewater treatment facility and drinking water system for the Town of Collierville.

The investigation began in April of 1997, after TDEC employees discovered an illegal bypass installed at the Collierville Waste Water Treatment Facility, allowing untreated wastewater to discharge into the Wolfe River. TDEC officials noticed a foul odor while inspecting a subdivision in close proximity to the plant. In June, 1997, Williams left his job in Collierville.

Officials also discovered Williams had submitted false reports and test results to TDEC concerning the discharge of wastewater. In addition, they found Williams, who was the licensed operator of the drinking water system for Collierville, had falsified test results concerning the drinking water back to January, 1993, potentially jeopardizing consumers' safety.

The prosecution of this case was the culmination of a joint investigation by officials of TDEC, the Criminal Investigation Division of the United States Environmental Protection Agency, the Shelby County District Attorney General's Office, and the State Attorney General's Office.